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THINK PEACE



By ABE CORY.



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THINK PEACE

By

Abraham Edward
ABE CORY

Author of "The Trail
to the Hearts
of Men"



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**DEDICATED TO
THE PEACE ORGANIZATIONS
OF THE WORLD**

**“Till the war-drum throbb’d no longer,
And the battle-flags were furl’d
In the Parliament of man,
The Federation of the world.”**

“Be at Peace.”

—Job 22:21.

“Live in Peace.”

—2 Cor. 13:11.

“And on Earth Peace.”

—Luke 2:14.

“Peace I Leave with You.”

—John 14:27.

“Grace to You and Peace.”

—Rom. 1:7

“Preach the Gospel of Peace.”

—Rom. 10:15.

**“Follow After the Things that
Make for Peace.”**

—Rom. 14:19.

“God Hath Called Us to Peace.”

—1 Cor. 7:15.

“Follow Peace with All.”

—Heb. 12:14.

“Love the Truth and Peace.”

—Zech. 8:19.

THINK PEACE

FIVE men, whose names are familiar in the realm of American business, sat on the deck of a pleasure yacht that had found its way out of New York harbor and was headed up the New England coast. It was night.

They were talking war and war trade, for all of them had been in some of the countries at war, and had dealt in a financial or trade way with the nations engaged in the world conflict. They had

THINK PEACE

prognosticated the length of the war and discussed, incidentally, its causes. Some of them favored one nation, and some another, for they were not neutrals.

One man had been silent, although he was a prominent figure in the group. His face marked the man of strength, the man who had battled his way to the top. The conversation was interrupted for a moment, for above them the wireless was flashing and crackling its way out into uncharted space. When the instrument lapsed into silence the company

THINK PEACE

seemed to catch its spirit, and they waited. For some time they smoked on without a word, and then Gregory, the man who had said very little, spoke in a quiet and restrained voice.

“Yes, we talk of the horrors of war,” he said, “but we have profited by it. We seem powerless to stop it, but are we? That boy yonder in the wireless cabin sent his message into the trackless night, but he knew that somewhere there was a receiver for it. We think war, we talk war, and as our thought messages leap into

THINK PEACE

the untraversed, millions of minds are attuned to the thought of war, and the world is mad; but to-night, if we were to cease talking war, preparedness, and anti-preparedness, and think peace, what would happen?"

A man with a keen face sat opposite him and chopped out in pointed question:

"But where are the receivers for the thought of peace? Millions of men are thinking war, but who are thinking peace?"

"Yes, that's a good question, Fleming—Who are thinking

THINK PEACE

peace? Ah! there are more than we think, many more than we think," mused Gregory, half to the men and half to himself.

"Where are the receivers for peace?" questioned the man who had led the discussion over the continuance of the war. His name was Emerson, and men respected him because of his aggressiveness in the business world.

"Well, I know one," he continued. "A few months ago I went out to Japan on some war contracts. I found that Russia was mixed up in it and I got per-

THINK PEACE

mission to go across on the Trans-Siberian Road, and after nearly three weeks we dropped into Moscow. It was the time the Germans were hammering away at Warsaw. Every line of communication through Poland was airtight, but it was necessary that I should reach some of the leaders at the front. I got permission, and with an interpreter we started down the choked and glutted railroad. After three days we came close to the lines, closer than I had ever been. We found that it was necessary to go back through the

THINK PEACE

birch forests by road. A drosky was commissioned by one of the officers. Here and there we passed villages filled only with women, and when night came on we stopped at the cabin of a Cossack. Yes, I know they are half human and half animal," he answered to the thoughts he sensed were crossing the minds of those who listened. "Well, I don't know how it was, but a woman came out. She had the face of the peasant, and she was angular, with all the marks that toil leaves on woman, but her face had lost the expres-

THINK PEACE

sionless gaze of the peasant, for she came eagerly to us and asked if I were a doctor. You know American doctors have pushed their way with the Red Cross into the hearts of the Russians. When the interpreter said, 'No,' a look of despair came to that woman's face, such as I have never yet seen. We went inside. I don't know how he got there, for he had come some distance, but there was her husband, a Cossack who had been wounded. Poison had entered his wound, and like a hunted animal he had sought his home.

THINK PEACE

Oh, what a cabin; small, lonely, far removed—hidden in the birch forests. His wife—alone. She was crossing herself to the Eikon that hung in the corner of the room. In an hour he died. We helped to bury him in a box of half-cut logs, and then we left her alone. No, I never saw her again, but I believe I could think peace to-night and she'd get it. The double lines in France and the double lines in the east could not stop the telepathy of the heart on its way to that little cabin among the birches."

THINK PEACE

“Is not she thinking war?”
Fleming queried.

“She? My God, no! She is afraid of her conquerors, as all women are, but to-night she is standing before the little image of the Christ on the cross, yearning for peace. Yes, I got her message. If the world could only tune its receivers to pick up the messages that are flashing across it to-night, it would know that the wives who are widowed are thinking peace. They are too sad for revenge. The heart silences are too sacred for hate.”

THINK PEACE

“Yes, Emerson, you’ve hit it,” said Gregory; “I know some one who would pick up my message of peace to-night.”

“Who?” asked a man named Purvis.

“Well, this is a different story,” Gregory replied. “It happened in the first days of the war. My wife and I had been spending the summer in Germany. We had wandered from Cologne to Konigsberg, from Warsaw to Munich, and from Berlin back to Cologne, and at last by chance—for I had said there could be no war—we had

THINK PEACE

gone up the Rhine to Mainz. My wife had been educated abroad, and had as a friend a German girl who had married an officer in the German army. We were with them in the hotel at Mainz. I never saw two prettier kiddies than they had. It was the end of July, and the order came for the officer to return to his regiment. We left them alone for their last meal together, although their table was next to ours in the dining-room. The meal was finished, and the father lifted his glass to drink to the health of the family. His face was stream-

THINK PEACE

ing with tears. The children looked on in wonder and sobbed, too, but the mother smiled. The glasses clicked together and they drank. We saw him off at the station, and the wife alone seemed calm. She smiled a good-by to her soldier husband, and then, as the train pulled out of sight, she fainted. The children went down on the platform beside her, and as she opened her eyes they wailed into her ear, 'Oh, why did papa go away?' 'For the Fatherland,' the mother murmured."

He paused in his story, but

THINK PEACE

finally said: "He took the final journey in Belgium. The kiddies are with their mother in southern Germany. My wife was with them last month. At night the little girl cries, 'Why did papa go away?' And the mother still whispers to them, 'For the Fatherland.' Yes, I know, men, that nationalism has its virtues and its claims, but those children yonder get me to-night as the best in me sends a message of peace across the world. The children without fathers are not calling for war, for they are too near the heart of God. True, their hearts

THINK PEACE

can be embittered so that they will want war, but my message can go to them in every language and they will 'Think Peace' with me, for the children of the world are all akin. The heart of childhood knows only the language of love."

Their talk was illustrated unconsciously by the wireless boy who was again sending streams of inquiry into the night, and the men listened.

Finally Gregory turned to his son who was sitting at one side of the group.

"Harold," he asked, "where are

THINK PEACE

you sending your message of
'Think Peace'?"

In the dim light of the deck lamp
the men could see the boy's face
sadden.

"I think you know, father."

"Yes, I know, son, but tell the
men, for they are reaching out to
the receiving-stations to-night."

The son stood up to tell his story.
He was a splendidly built young
fellow.

"You know, men, I went to Ox-
ford and was graduated from Trinity
College in '15. My roommate
was a young Englishman whose

THINK PEACE

mother lived on a country place down in the Devon country. His father was dead and this lad was the pride of his mother's heart. The call came and he went, as all young men should go, for a man can not be a slacker. When the call comes men must go. He went down on the Flanders line. I am young and I hardly know what grief is, but if you men had been with me in that Devon home after my graduation, you would never loan another dollar or sell another ounce of anything that makes for war. She had always appeared

THINK PEACE

young and light-hearted, but when I went to see her the sadness of the ages was in her face. There was no wailing, only a great longing in her eyes, but it was a longing that makes my heart stop now. It was the sorrow of the human and the eternal. She talked about a thousand things, but it was the son of whom she was thinking. I know I thought of him constantly, when I was with her. She wants England to win and says she would give a hundred sons, but always there is the question, 'Was there not another way with honor?' 'Could

THINK PEACE

not all the nations have seen justice triumph without the pain of war?’ She is thinking peace tonight, not for her own sake, but for the sake of the mothers of every nation, that they may be spared the sorrow that will haunt her to the end. I am only a youngster compared with you men, but to every home in Europe I can send a message that will reach the mothers, who in dumbness of pain are asking, ‘Is there not another way?’ ‘Should not the sons of women build rather than destroy?’”

One of the men who had profited

THINK PEACE

most financially from the war, and who had listened with wider eyes than any, was the man named Purvis.

“Men, you haven’t it yet.” He spoke quietly. “You are right when you say there are receivers for peace, but you have missed it when you think that the mothers, wives and children are the only ones thinking peace. Listen, men,” he said as he pulled himself to his feet; “every man on a stifling submarine; every man in the dirty, crawling trenches; every man huddled into a train; every man who is

THINK PEACE

aiming a gun from some sheltered hill; every man who flies by night and drops a hellish bomb—is in his inner soul crying for peace. I have two illustrations. You know I have been to the front in two countries, and the honor of silence is upon me as to locality, but in one of the ditches on the western line two wounded soldiers from opposite lines were thrown together, one from Austria and one from France. Bits of shell had opened their channels of blood, and life was ebbing. ‘Comrade, I am sorry,’ gasped the French soldier in broken

THINK PEACE

German. ‘Ah, I could die gladly if I could know that I had not caused your death,’ poured out the Austrian soldier. Death was near, and the French soldier flung out his hand until it fell on the face of the Austrian, and in convulsive breath he moaned, ‘Here’s to Peace.’ The French sergeant who was watching, turned his face away, but I saw that it was working with grief. When he turned to minister to the dying men he whispered, ‘Here’s to Peace.’ No thought for himself was in that call, for the next day peace eternal was his, and it came

THINK PEACE

because of unusual risk. He was thinking of France. He knew, as the soldier of every land knows, that victory can mean nothing unless this carnage ends quickly. They found a letter which he had written to his wife. 'A rain of shell is falling on us,' he wrote. 'Our kitchen and provisions were cannonaded all night. The field kitchens no longer arrive. Oh, if only the end were in sight!—Peace! Peace!—is the cry on every man's lips.* Men, the highest qualities of which every land boasts are,

*See the May number of *Scribner's Magazine*, p. 543.

THINK PEACE

patriotism, love of home, love of the glories of education and religion—and I know that these qualities are calling for peace from millions of noble hearts, but even these qualities, the best of earth's accomplishments, will die if this hellish war continues.” He was silent for a moment.

“I was over in Asia Minor,” he continued, “and one day in one of the darkened streets of a town, in back of the lines, I came upon a turbaned Mohammedan. One look revealed to me that he was a soldier and the next that he was blind.

THINK PEACE

You know I have lived in Constantinople for many years, and I talk a mongrel Turkish. ‘Why has the light gone out of your eyes?’ I inquired. ‘War; cursed be war,’ he hissed between his teeth. ‘And you will be glad when peace comes?’ I asked. He hesitated a moment, and then his face found the east, as he whispered: ‘Peace, Peace—Allah, Allah—Praise be to Allah.’ ”

“Yes, but I am afraid that this half of the world is not thinking peace,” said Fleming, after a moment.

“There are more than you

THINK PEACE

think," answered Lawrence, who was the least important in the group, but he spoke with feeling. "Men, think of the citizens of the United States who have sons, brothers, fathers, cousins and nephews yonder in the trenches. This war is coming closer to some of us than you realize. It was about eight years ago that a young German came to New York on a scholarship furnished by the Government for foreign study. My sister was at Columbia when they met, loved and married. He never became a citizen of the United

THINK PEACE

States. They had a home here and one in Germany, but they were here when the war came. Words can not describe that parting, for every human tie was here, but duty was there. He went. The wife and children are here now. There must be another way. I am not pro-German in my sympathies, but as long as that splendidly trained young fellow is over there in the trenches we are going to want peace. When we think of the heart-ties that are binding America to the Old World, we ought not to be partisan, no matter where our

THINK PEACE

friends are. We should be citizens of the world."

When the silence which followed was finally broken, it was by the quiet question of a practical business man.

"But how?" he asked. "Will it not go on until all the men are killed, or until exhaustion or starvation ends it all?"

"No, that will not win," returned Gregory, speaking again. "The desire of the world alone can win. The world leaders inspired the world with the desire for war. They thought war and it came. It

THINK PEACE

will last as long as America wonders what will happen to its business if the war should end quickly. On our lips we deprecate the war, but in our hearts do not many of us dread its end because of the effect on business? It will last as long as the world sees red."

"What about the rulers of the warring nations?" asked Fleming.

"They are human too," answered the other. "In the beginning they thought only of the glories of war, but now, with their sons and their countries' sons going down in the red burial of battle, they would

THINK PEACE

stop it, but they are largely held back from negotiating peace 'by what the world would think.' ”

“Ah! that men could kill ambitious hate,” yearned the voice of Gregory’s son.

“There is only one way, son,” returned the father, “and that is to kill the thought of hate by thinking peace.”

The silence that followed was a long one. Each man was thinking long, long thoughts of the world and its woe. They looked at the flag which floated in the dim light from the masthead, and each knew

THINK PEACE

that he would give his fortune, his life, and his children's lives for its protection, for there are no better patriots than men of great affairs. Each knew, too, the effect of thought in business; why not so with the world at war? "Oh, if we could only help," was the silent wish of all.

Finally one after another arose and passed quietly to his cabin, and Gregory was left alone. He went and stood at the yacht's rail and watched the waters as they went by. As he stood there he seemed to catch from the very

THINK PEACE

winds the desires of the world. They came to him, not in language familiar, but from heart depths that had paid the remission price of peace. He looked into the stars and acknowledged that he had helped to continue the war not only through trade, but he had talked war, had thought war, and had wished for victory for the side with which he had dealt. Was that right? His mind had been one of the receivers of war. "It can not, must not, go on," he proclaimed to the night wind, "and when peace comes it must be right. Every man

THINK PEACE

and nation must have the right to trade, to live and to grow, and none must perish.”

The grip of business had fallen from him and he was reaching out —out into the Eternal. Never had he sensed the other world so clearly. He knew that from the Eternal he was receiving his message of peace. Hate, murder and revenge held no place with him. From somewhere came a verse long forgotten—“As a man thinketh in his heart so is he,” and then it seemed to be paraphrased and he felt the Eternal saying, “As the world thinketh in

THINK PEACE

its heart so is it.” Think war, and the world runs red. Think peace, and the deepest motives of hearts that know respond and peace must come. Kings, emperors, and the powers that be, must yield to the desires of the world’s heart.

A voice interrupted his thought. It was the wireless boy.

“Any messages before you retire, sir?” he inquired.

“Yes, this one. Send out this message—‘Think Peace, Think Peace.’ ”

“To whom, sir?”

“To the receivers that are

THINK PEACE

atuned." The boy was gone.

Gregory waited. The biting sparks broke the silence.

"Yes, it is going to you, Cossack wife; to you, German children; to you, soldier in the trench; to you, cultured British mother; to you, Turkish soldier from whom the light has gone out; to you, O heart atuned to the Eternal, wherever you may be. We will think peace, and victory will be ours where murderous guns have brought only defeat and woe."

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